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Inside this Issue:

Combat Promotion Awarded to Hospital Corpsman	2
Lejeune Hospital Unveils New Mother Baby Unit, Exchange Pharmacy	2
NMCSDF Conducts Earthquake Drill	3
Navy, JMSDF Medical Teams Train Together During Mass Casualty Drill	4
Navy Ophthalmic Command Offers Six New Eye-Glass Frames	5

Items of Interest:

U.S. and Mexico Pledge Increased Cooperation in Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Along Border. The United States and México announced Nov. 14 the signing of an agreement to boost cooperation on pandemic influenza preparedness among the six Mexican states and four U.S. states that share the international boundary. Meeting in Hermosillo, Sonora, México, HHS Assistant Secretary for Public Health Emergency Preparedness Craig Vanderwagen and the Mexican Director-General of Epidemiology of the Mexican Federal Secretariat of Health Pablo Kuri signed a joint declaration to strengthen the commitment of the two nations to coordinate preparedness efforts, domestic and international disease surveillance activities, and response planning in the event of an outbreak of pandemic influenza. For more information, visit www.hhs.gov

Navy and Marine Corps Medical News

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‘Navy Medicine Needs You!’ Naval Medical Logistics Command Aims to Overcome Health Care Provider Shortage

By Mass Communications Specialist
1st Class Jeffrey B. McDowell
Navy Medicine Support Command
Public Affairs Office

NAVAL MEDICAL LOGISTICS COMMAND, FORT DETRICK, Md.

- Navy medicine is looking for doctors and nursing professionals to join more than 3,700 health care personnel worldwide to provide health care to the men, women and family members of the Navy and Marine Corps team.

Naval Medical Logistics Command (NMLC) contract hires won't be deploying, but will serve their country on the homefront. As a contract hire, providers will administer health care in a Navy hospital or a Navy clinic in the U.S.

"One of the big advantages of this program is that providers can serve their country and support the war effort," said Andrew Muenzfeld, Naval Medical Logistics Command's director for Healthcare Services Support. "There are plenty of people out there who would take some pride in working inside the naval hospital and in some ways contributing to the overall benefit to the country — without signing up."

Dr. Reuben Smith, a contract physician who works in the Acute Care Department at Naval Hospital Jacksonville, says it's his military background that gives this job personal meaning.

"I have kindred feelings for

(Continued on page 3)



ARABIAN SEA - Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Brandin Huggett from guided-missile cruiser USS Anzio's (CG 68) rescue and assistance team provides medical aid to a crew member from the motor vessel Al Shams, a Pakistani-flagged dhow Nov. 13. U.S. Navy photo by Information Systems Technician 1st Class Christopher Barb

Combat Promotion Awarded to Hospital Corpsman

By Deborah R. Kallgreen, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Public Affairs Office

NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER PORTSMOUTH, Va. — Eight months serving as “doc” to the Marines in Iraq has earned Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Otis F. Seamon at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP) a rare combat promotion.

Seamon served with the Marine Corps ground forces Lima Company 3rd Battalion 8th Marines as the Senior Line Corpsman in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from January to August 2005. While he was officially promoted today to hospital corpsman second class, the promotion is retroactive to September 2006, and is awarded specifically for his outstanding support of his Marine unit in Fallujah, Iraq.

He is cited as providing “superb medical care to his unit while routinely under attack from mortar fire, improvised explosive device

(IED) explosions, and suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (SVBIED). Seamon successfully and single-handedly treated eight urgent and 20 routine casualties after an SVBIED attack during an ‘on-the-spot’ vehicle checkpoint and expertly treated nine routine and three urgent casualties after an IED ambush. Seamon consistently treated his Marines and fellow corpsmen without regard for his own safety while maintaining tactical integrity.”

Capt. Bruce L. Gillingham, NMCP deputy commander, promoted Seamon and said, “I am in awe of your accomplishments. There is no higher honor than to be recognized for promotion by the Marine Corps. There is no higher calling for a Navy Corpsman than to be up front with his Marine brothers and sisters.”

Seamon is the first Sailor from NMCP to advance through the Combat Meritorious Advancement Program since its inception in April



NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER PORTSMOUTH, Va.—Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Otis F. Seamon photo provided by Mass Communications Specialist Seaman Apprentice James Holcroft

2005. The program provides commanders the opportunity to advance junior enlisted Sailors who display uncommon valor and ex-

(Continued on page 4)

Lejeune Hospital Unveils New Mother Baby Unit, Exchange Pharmacy

By Raymond Applewhite, Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune Public Affairs

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. - Two ribbon-cutting ceremonies Nov. 3 marked the grand opening of a \$5.5 million renovated Mother Baby Unit at Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune and a full-service pharmacy at the Camp Lejeune Marine Corps Exchange.

The new unit, called Coastal Carolina Mother Baby Unit at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, consists of 18 new labor and delivery suites. Special features include a level II nursery for newborns that require close monitoring and treatment from birth to 30 days of age, and infant security system and lactation consultants.

The joint venture is a result of collaboration between Naval Hospitals Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. As a result of the improvement, hospital officials plan to increase the number of monthly deliveries. Additionally, the unit provides 24-hour coverage by a birth team staffed by obstetrics and gynecology (OB-GYN) providers, midwives and family practice providers.

“It took us a while to complete the renovation, and as a result of a lot of hard work and dedication,” said Capt. Mark Olesen, commanding officer, Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune. “We are ready to move forward to better serve our patients.”

According to Capt. Eleanor Valentin, commanding officer, Naval Hospital Cherry Point, military family members requiring maternity care who live between Lejeune and Cherry Point can choose to continue using the military health care system if they elect to.

The new larger, more spacious rooms feature state-of-the-art equipment for the baby and mother and offers a comfortable sleeper chair for overnight stays for dads or family members.

Later in the day, the hospital cut the ribbon opening a new, full-service pharmacy at the Camp Lejeune Marine Corps Exchange.

“Patients can drop off their scripts, and pick up their scripts up later,” said Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Flott, head of the pharmacy department.

For patients' convenience, the exchange pharmacy offers a phone line that patients can use to reach the Tricare Mail-Order Pharmacy if they desire to order medications by mail and have them sent to their home. The ceremony was attended by Congressman Walter B. Jones, of North Carolina 3rd Congressional District; Rear Adm. Donald R. Gintzig, deputy commander, Task Force Navy Family and Associate Chief Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Health Care Operations; Col. Adele E. Hodges, commanding officer of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune; as well as other dignitaries and guests.

NMCS D Conducts Earthquake Drill

By Mass Communication Specialist
Seaman José R. Rolón, Fleet Public
Affairs Center, Pacific

SAN DIEGO - Military and civilian staff members participated in a mass evacuation drill at Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCS D) Nov. 15.

The exercise simulated casualties that could occur during an earthquake and allowed hospital staff to rehearse what to do in a real emergency.

Different facilities had different responsibilities during the drill. For example, Security Department deployed as in an actual event, and the emergency department staged patients for transfer to the emergency room.

"Drills are necessary and need to be done even if they are not always convenient, because you are

taking away working personnel from the patients," said Lt. j.g. Amanda Bradford, health care administrator for Patient Administration Department. "But it is important to be more aware of what to expect in a real situation."

Subordinate command center staff mustered and established communication during the entire drill to keep a better control of the exercise and staff.

"We always have drills to be ready for any eventual disaster in the facility," said Lt. Cmdr. Erick Peterson, Emergency Department team leader. "Sometimes we work with the county and sometimes we conduct the drills by ourselves."

The hospital undergoes a continual planning process for any contingency, including what procedures staff members follow in the event of

an earthquake.

"We have drills every six months and all personnel from medical center participate," said Chief Hospital Corpsman (FMF/SW) Elvis Lansangan, Administration Department leading chief petty officer. "The reason we are doing this is to learn what to do in a real situation or any kind of emergency, earthquake or terrorist attack."

While there was reduction in patient care services offered due to the drill, business continued as normal.

"The drill was a good idea because we are in an area where earthquakes occur very often," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Mark D. Olsen, Patient Administration. "We need to be prepared for a real emergency situation that may happen at any time."

NMLC continued...

(Continued from page 1)

those folks who are being deployed because I have deployed," Smith said. "I also understand some of the issues Sailors and Marines have to undergo when they are deployed, when they return, even more so."

Muenzfeld said Navy Medicine suffers the same fate as most health care-related companies: the nationwide shortfall of physicians and nursing professionals. "In the industry, as a whole, there is a great demand for their services, but a woefully short supply of workers," he said. "Because the military has placed so many people in the desert performing health care, all those people have been back-filled, using contracts."

NMLC works with more than 200 companies to acquire the services of the health care providers with the desired skill sets. The command's acquisition of qualified health care providers is filled with other challenges, too. Besides the national shortage, there is a built-in lack of flexibility in regards to contract hires in the Navy logistics world.

"We just need to do a better job of marketing Navy Medicine and Defense Department medicine as a place that people want to come to work. We have many, many wonderful attributes and we have some attributes that the private sector doesn't have," said Muenzfeld.

Tish Ferguson, a contracted nurse at Naval Hospital Jacksonville, said her job is more rewarding than working in the civilian sector. Like Smith, she enjoys the focus of the mission and the working environment.

"To me, it's more family-oriented," Ferguson says. "We really get to know our patients and, because they



NAVAL HOSPITAL JACKSONVILLE - Dr Reuben Smith, a contract physician who works in the Acute Care Department at Naval Hospital Jacksonville, conducts an examination on Donna Bilton. Dr. Smith is one of more than 3700 doctors, nurses, and other personnel who provide health care on a contractual basis within Navy medicine. *U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist 1st Class Jeffrey B. McDowell*

are serving their country, it feels different to me. There's a camaraderie that exists here that I did not find in the civilian population. Working here, there's a sense of everybody working together. So, it's a different, a nicer environment."

Navy, JMSDF Medical Teams Train Together During Mass Casualty Drill

By Mass Communication Specialist
2nd Class Chantel M. Clayton, Fleet
Public Affairs Center Pacific, Det.
Japan

AZUMA ISLAND, Japan - U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Yokosuka, Japan, along with personnel from Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF), Commander, Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) Fire Department, and Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC), conducted a mass casualty drill at Hakoza Fuel Terminal on Azuma Island, Nov. 15.

The drill simulated casualties that could happen on the island, should a fuel tank catch fire and explode. Simulated casualties included a major fuel spill, deaths, and wounded personnel involving both U.S. and Japanese employees.

The focus of the drill was training for USNH Yokosuka's Special Medical Operations Response Team (SMORT), along with their medical counterparts from the JMSDF.

"The purpose of this drill is to demonstrate our capabilities to work with casualties," said Lt. Cmdr. Roger Lankhee Jr., head of Staff Education and Training at USNH Yokosuka, Japan.

"Our main objective is to work together with our JMSDF counterparts. They have their version of a SMORT team," said Lt. Laurie Christensen, the Preventive Medicine department head at USNH Yokosuka.

According to Christensen, this was the first extensive joint drill of this kind. They plan to do drills more frequently, and train together with the JMSDF about once a quarter, she added.

Simulated casualties were stabilized on color-coded tarps at the scene.

"Color-coded tarps represent different triage categories, depending on emergent need for care," explained Christensen.

Once patients were stabilized, those needing more treatment were evacuated by boat to local hospitals. Japanese casualties were taken to a local Japanese hospital, and Americans were taken to USNH Yokosuka.

Keeping track of all patients was a critical role in the mass casualty drill.

"It gives the command an idea of what type of scenario they have out here," stated Lt. Elmer Jimenez, who works in the Quality Management Department of the hospital, and the senior medical regulator during the drill. "The receiving end, which is the hospital, needs to know how many patients they are getting so they are prepared."

USNH Yokosuka and JMSDF were not the only medical representatives present during the drill. U.S. 7th Fleet also sent an observer.

"My hope is that in the future, as I represent the waterfront, waterfront medical may also partici-



AZUMA ISLAND, Japan - Doctors and hospital corpsmen from U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka, Japan Special Medical Operation Response Team (SMORT), assist a patient during a mass casualty drill held at the Hakoza Fuel Terminal on Azuma Island Nov. 15. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Chantel M. Clayton

pate in the drill," said Capt. Michael McCarten, 7th Fleet surgeon, and observer during the drill.

The drill also helped give the medical personnel a view of what injuries to possibly expect in similar circumstances.

"We can expect to treat all kinds of trauma - burns, blunt trauma, fractures, anything," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Sarai Bradford, a surgical technician in the hospital's emergency room, and a SMORT team member. "I learned that we have to make sure our gear is ready, so we are prepared for any type of injury."

Combat Promotion continued...

(Continued from page 2)

traordinary leadership while engaged in, or in direct support of, combat operations. With the concurrence of the Commanding General of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, NMCP Commander Rear Adm. Thomas R. Cullison nominated Seamon for advancement. He was one of only two Sailors awarded a combat meritorious promotion to E-5 in this quarter.

Following the ceremony, Seamon was humble, stating "I was just doing my job." He spoke with pride about service members still deployed, "They're sacrificing their lives for the people of Iraq."

He received several awards while deployed with Lima Company: the Fleet Marine Force (FMF) pin, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Iraq Campaign Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service (GWOTS) Medal.

Seamon currently serves in

NMCP's Command Education & Training Department teaching the Emergency Medical Technician course. He uses his combat experience to teach Combat Casualty Care to corpsmen who are scheduled to deploy to do just what he did - augment the Marines in Iraq.

And Seamon's thinking about his future in the Navy. "I plan to go on to officer school and give back more to the Navy," he said.

Navy Ophthalmic Command Offers Six New Eye-Glass Frames

By Larry Coffey, Navy Medicine Support Command Public Affairs Office

NAVY MEDICINE SUPPORT COMMAND JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Navy-issued eye glasses became much more in style Nov. 1. That's when the Naval Ophthalmic Support and Training Command (NOSTRA) introduced its latest "Frames of Choice" program, offering an additional six new choices for active duty Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel.

"Frames of Choice are civilian-style frames offered to active duty military members," said Cmdr. Matthew E. Newton, NOSTRA executive officer.

The new frames will be rolled out incrementally with availability depending on the service member's location. Military retirees, regardless of rank, are not eligible for the new frames under this program.

NOSTRA, located at the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station in Virginia, is one of 24 labs in the Optical Fabrication Enterprise (OFE) that fabricate eyewear for all eligible personnel. The OFE also includes eight Army fabrication labs. As DoD's "tertiary" fabrication site, NOSTRA has the people and equipment needed to fabricate the most complex prescriptions filled in the military. NOSTRA is also the training site for Navy and Army personnel training to become laboratory and clinical opticians through the Tri-Service Optician School.

A Frames of Choice (FOC) program is not new to the Navy. The original program began in 1996 and also offered six styles. Two of the original six styles will still be available under the roll out, expanding the total to eight.

Before 1996, there were no choices in Navy eye glasses, Newton explained. Active duty personnel

choices were to wear the boot camp issued pair or pay out of pocket for eye glasses purchased at civilian shops. Operationally required eye glasses were available for personnel serving in some operational positions such as on board submarines or in a flight-crew status, and remain available.

"It became a quality-of-life issue," Newton said. "The advertisements made that very clear. After this the Department of the Navy medical department started the process of developing a program to begin offering choice of frames to active duty personnel."

Newton said active duty service members who have not been issued a FOC during the past year from a military fabrication lab are eligible to order new FOC eye glasses. All that is required is a current eye exam that is less than two years old.

"Current guidelines are that personnel can have one FOC per year," Newton said. "If during that year they damage or lose their eye glasses, they can request another pair. If their eyesight changes to the point they need a new prescription, they can also get an additional frame of choice. And, we do not require they send in the old frames."

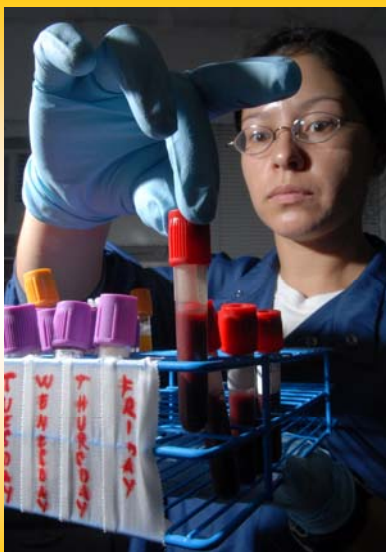
Active duty personnel or reservists/guardsmen serving on active duty over 30 days may get frames of their choice by visiting their local optometry clinic or ordering on line at the Naval Ophthalmic Support and Training Activity web site – <http://nostra.norfolk.navy.mil/sending.cfm>. A new website will be up by Nov. 30 – <http://nostra.norfolk.navy.mil>. An order form (DD771) and instructions on how to complete the form are at the websites.

*Happy
Thanksgiving!!!*



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SANTA RITA, Guam – Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Diana Rodriguez, a medical laboratory technician, searches for a specimen for repeat analysis at the U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, Branch Medical Clinic laboratory located on Naval Base Guam Nov. 14. Rodriguez performs routine tests in the laboratory to provide data for use in diagnosis and treatment of patients. *U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class John F. Looney*